From: Mark Ferlatte
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 1:31pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I believe that the proposed final judgment is lacking an important
remedy: Microsoft should be required to provide public and open
documentation on their application file formats with enough detail to
allow other software developers to develop file readers and writers for
those formats. In my experience as a Linux developer and system
administrator, the largest remaining issue with converting a site from
running Microsoft Windows and Office is the ability to work with legacy
Word and Excel documents. These undocumented formats form part of the
Applications Barrier to Entry (see "Findings of Fact" pp20 and pp39).

If these file formats were made available, it would be possible for
consumers to switch to an alternative office suite (such as OpenOffice)
which could allow them to switch to an alternative operating system if
it were compelling enough. This choice should be able to be made by the
consumer, as opposed to any operating system or application developer.

Sincerely,

Mark Ferlatte
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